

# Nottingham Trent University

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## Inspection dates

7 to 10 March 2023

## Inspection judgements

	Early years ITT	Primary age-phase	Secondary age-phase	Further education age-phase
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement
The quality of education and training	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement
Leadership and management	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	N/A	Good	Good	Good

## What is it like to be a trainee at this ITE provider?

Trainees feel extremely well supported on their journey from 'novice to expert'. The high level of care that they receive from staff is appreciated. One trainee spoke for many when they commented that 'course leaders try their best to deliver an all-round positive experience'. Schools, colleges and settings praise the knowledge and professionalism of the trainees that they receive. Trainees describe the training link between university and placement as 'cohesive'.

Trainees are taught by subject experts. Trainees are prepared well to adapt learning to meet the needs of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The training to teach systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) is strong. However, some aspects of the curriculum in further education and skills (FES) are not planned precisely enough.

Mentor training is of high quality. However, some mentors do not access these extensive training opportunities. New leaders are beginning to put better checks in place to ensure mentoring is consistently strong. Sometimes leaders fail to check carefully enough that the quality of mentoring is consistently strong. This weakens the impact that a few mentors have on the trainee experience.

Trainees speak with enthusiasm about the many additional enrichment opportunities on offer. These ensure that trainees have the knowledge and confidence to be a successful part of wider school life.

## **Information about this ITE provider**

- Nottingham Trent University has 629 trainees in total across the early years, primary, secondary and FES phases.
- Early years trainees follow a route that leads to the award of early years teacher status.
- In the primary and secondary phases, trainees follow a four-year or a three-year undergraduate programme, a one-year postgraduate programme or a one-year School Direct fee-paid and salaried route. The undergraduates' programmes lead to Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degrees with qualified teacher status. The postgraduate programmes lead to a Postgraduate Certificate of Education. Trainees may also undertake a level 6 apprenticeship.
- FES trainees follow part-time or full-time courses. The training leads to level 5 Certificate in Education, level 6 Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and level 7 Postgraduate Certificate in Education.
- Primary trainees opt for either the three to seven primary age-phase or the five to 11 primary age-phase. Secondary trainees opt for the 11 to 19 phase. Some secondary trainees opt for the 14 to 19 phase if this is more suitable to the subject that they are studying to teach, for example business studies.
- The partnership works with over 600 partner schools across the East Midlands region.
- The current inspection grades of schools and settings in the partnership range from inadequate to outstanding.

## **Information about this inspection**

- The inspection was carried out by 12 of His Majesty's Inspectors and two Ofsted Inspectors.
- Inspectors spoke with the Director and Deputy Director of the Institute of Education and phase leaders for early years, primary, secondary and FES. They met with the leader responsible for mentoring, subject leaders and tutors. They met with key stakeholders.
- In all phases, inspectors spoke with headteachers, principals, placement setting leaders, curriculum leaders, tutors, mentors and teachers. They observed subject- and centre-based training. They scrutinised a range of documents, including evidence of self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- In the early years phase, inspectors visited or communicated with three placement settings and spoke with five trainees. They spoke with six mentors. They conducted focused reviews of mathematics, communication, reading, language and physical development.

- In the primary phase, inspectors visited or communicated with 13 placement schools and spoke with 25 trainees. They spoke with 12 mentors. They conducted focused reviews in English, mathematics, science, physical education, history, design and technology, music, reading and modern foreign languages.
- In the secondary phase, inspectors visited or communicated with five placement schools and spoke with 16 trainees. They spoke with 10 mentors. They conducted focused reviews of English, mathematics, history, science and music.
- In the FES phase, inspectors visited or communicated with six placement settings and spoke with 34 trainees. They spoke with six mentors. They conducted focused reviews in a range of subjects, including psychology, textiles and fashion, media studies, music and performance, dance, criminology, games art, early childhood and SEND.
- Inspectors spoke with early careers teachers from within the primary and secondary phases. They spoke with previous FES and early years trainees.

# Early years phase report

## **What works well in the early years phase and what needs to be done better?**

Leaders are ambitious for trainees. They want trainees to eventually be able to lead early years settings. Leaders have chosen high-quality research for trainees to read. Trainees learn about how to write policies and explain them well. They understand how to keep children safe.

Trainees undertake a variety of placements. Leaders select these with care. By the end of the course, trainees have worked in a broad range of settings with the youngest children as well as those who are about to start school. Trainees have placements in schools to find out how children's learning continues there. There are imaginative additions to the course. Trainees learn about outdoor learning and exploration. Leaders know trainees well. They encourage trainees to share the distinct knowledge that they have with others. For example, they help the other staff in their settings to better support children who speak English as an additional language.

Course leaders make sure that all trainers have strong subject knowledge and relevant experience. Trainees value the teaching they receive. For example, trainees skilfully use what they have learned about the cardinality of number when they help children to count. Training about a few areas of learning, such as physical development, comes later in the course. As a result, trainees do not have as much chance to deepen their knowledge or try out what they have learned, in these areas of learning.

Leaders have prioritised teaching about communication and language. Trainees know that this underpins early reading and phonics. They learn how to help children discriminate between the sounds that different instruments make. Trainees use their voices well to engage children in story time. They identify when children's language development is delayed and adapt their practice to support children with SEND. They learn how to explain to parents how they can help to support their children's development.

Leaders have developed a clear and structured approach to assessment. Regular audits and action plans ensure that trainees become reflective practitioners who build on what they know. University link tutors check trainees' progress when they visit them in their settings. Course leaders have created a wealth of resources to help mentors. However, not all mentors routinely attend training. A few mentors do not have the subject knowledge that they need. As a result, feedback is not always sharply focused.

## **What does the ITE provider need to do to improve the early years phase?**

### **[Information for the provider and appropriate authority]**

- Sometimes mentors' knowledge is underdeveloped or not up to date. They do not always identify the most pertinent points that a trainee needs to improve. Feedback to trainees does not always help trainees to develop their practice. Training is available, but not all mentors routinely access this. Leaders should ensure that all mentors engage with the training which is provided. They should make sure that all mentors develop the subject knowledge that they need to better support trainees' progress.
- Teaching is highly effective. However, the content and sequence of some elements of the course mean that some trainees do not gain the knowledge that they need in a timely fashion. Training about some areas of learning does not happen early enough for trainees to make best use of it. Leaders should refine the order of the trainee curriculum. They should ensure that all teaching is highly relevant to this phase. They should make sure that trainees benefit from opportunities to deepen their subject knowledge in sufficient time for them to develop this throughout their placements.

## **Does the ITE provider's early years phase comply with the ITE compliance criteria?**

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

# Primary phase report

## **What works well in the primary phase and what needs to be done better?**

Leaders have designed and implemented an ambitious curriculum for trainees that prepares them well for the professional challenge and reward of becoming a teacher in the primary phase.

Trainees understand how their training is positioned against the Department for Education's (DfE) core content framework, aligned to pertinent research. This focuses their attention on key aspects of the curriculum they need to learn while enabling them to connect their knowledge and skills across the fully compliant curriculum.

The content of the training programmes is well sequenced, enabling trainees to acquire and build their knowledge of how to teach national curriculum subjects effectively within and across phases of primary education. For instance, trainees are well grounded in how to teach SSP effectively. They feel confident that they are well prepared to support pupils' learning and development in both early reading and mathematics.

Trainees are typically assigned to appropriate school-based placements. This enables them to apply their learning from their centre-based taught sessions and assignments to teaching pupils. The importance of promoting inclusion is a strong aspect of training. Trainees are well informed about how to assess pupils' knowledge and identify the next steps in their learning. Trainees harness this understanding to adapt their teaching appropriately to support the needs of pupils with SEND.

Leaders have trained a cadre of mentors who feel well prepared to provide effective support to trainees to complement the centre-based training. The content of training of mentors is of good quality. However, on a few occasions, mentors and trainees cite that the communication about some of the training that needs to be followed up in school is not as detailed or timely as it could be.

Leaders have recently provided mentors with more specific guidance about the setting of targets for individual trainees, as part of the framework that leaders have developed as a means of assessing trainees' stages of development. While this is at an early stage of implementation, trainees are developing a clearer understanding of the aspects that they need to develop in their practice prior to the final summative assessment against the teachers' standards.

Subject leaders and trainers model, through their lectures and taught sessions, to trainees pedagogical approaches that will enhance their teaching. Leaders have established systematic checks to assure themselves of the quality of training that is provided by subject leaders and trainers.

## **What does the ITE provider need to do to improve the primary phase?**

### **[Information for the provider and appropriate authority]**

- Occasionally, mentors do not always have a sufficiently precise knowledge of the specific content of the centre-based training. This is in terms of the progression and sequencing of learning content, or it is provided at short notice. This undermines their ability to provide support to trainees to secure the high levels of cohesion that are expected between the centre- and school-based training. Leaders should ensure that all mentors are crystal clear about the content of the central training sessions so they can emphasise the main learning points during the school placement.
- A few mentors have raised that they have not received specific developmental feedback about the quality of their work. Leaders have recently established cluster networks as a means of quality assuring and moderating the work of mentors, although this is at an early stage. Support for mentors in the setting of targets to direct trainees' development has recently been enhanced. Hence, the provider has not equipped all mentors as well as it could to build up important training points precisely with trainees. Leaders should embed and strengthen arrangements to secure mentors' ongoing development to ensure the guidance and support for trainees is of the highest standard.

## **Does the ITE provider's primary phase comply with the ITE compliance criteria?**

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

## **Do apprenticeships in the ITE provider's primary phase satisfy the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision?**

- The provider meets the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision in the primary phase.

Leaders have taken a well-considered approach to the design and delivery of the apprenticeship programme. All partners are clear about their roles and responsibilities when they complete the commitment statements. The few apprentices feel part of a wider learning community because they access the same training as those on the postgraduate route. Experienced link tutors maintain a close eye on the progress and development of apprentices. Appropriate support ensures that apprentices receive beyond their minimum entitlement to training away from the workplace. Apprentices are given appropriate support as they matriculate through the gateway, enabling them to complete their training successfully.

# Secondary phase report

## **What works well in the secondary phase and what needs to be done better?**

Leaders are ambitious that trainees become confident, resourceful and resilient teachers. They aim for trainees to know how best to ensure that pupils learn and achieve well.

The curriculum, which complies fully with the DfE's core content framework, is sequenced to enable trainees to develop their knowledge and skills. Latest educational research underpins learning. Experts, including professionals external to the partnership, contribute to the programme's delivery. This enables trainees to gain insight into the latest thinking. During school placements, trainees benefit from a variety of opportunities to explore their learning further. They meet with, and observe the practice of, various school staff. Trainees regularly discuss their reflections with their mentors to deepen their understanding.

Trainees gain a sharp insight into how pupils learn. Leaders encourage trainees to reflect on what it is like to learn as a pupil. For example, trainees reflect on their own misconceptions when learning new subject knowledge so that they can use this when teaching pupils. Two assignments on designing learning, both in a lesson and across a series of lessons, reinforce trainees' understanding of the importance of carefully sequencing learning. Trainees reflect on how to adapt their teaching to cater for the needs of pupils with SEND and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Trainees understand how their own professional behaviour helps to create a positive and inclusive environment for learning.

Trainees value the support that leaders and mentors provide. In particular, trainees appreciate the personalised pastoral care they receive.

Mentors welcome the guidance and training course leaders provide them. Despite this support, there is some variability in how well a few mentors understand and apply leaders' intent for the programme. Leaders have begun to address this, including by improving their communication with mentors. Furthermore, leaders have also reviewed their processes for checking on the effectiveness of mentors' work. They have reflected on the latest research to clarify their understanding of what constitutes effective mentoring to inform the checks they make.

Regular assessment of trainees' progress focuses on the attributes they should demonstrate as they become more confident and reflective in their practice. Assessment highlights the importance of trainees' demonstration of appropriate professional behaviours.

New leadership has ensured that there is an appropriate focus on accurately evaluating the quality of the provision. Trainees know that leaders listen to and act on their views about the programme.



## **What does the ITE provider need to do to improve the secondary phase?**

### **[Information for the provider and appropriate authority]**

- Over time, leaders' checks have not ensured that all mentors support trainees consistently well. This has led to variability in some mentors' effectiveness. Leaders have begun to address this by reviewing what constitutes effective mentoring to improve the rigour of their checks. Leaders should ensure that there is consistency in the checks they undertake of mentors' work and the support they provide to those who need it so that all mentors are consistently effective.

## **Does the ITE provider's secondary phase comply with the ITE compliance criteria?**

- The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

## **Do apprenticeships in the ITE provider's secondary phase satisfy the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision?**

- The provider meets the principles and requirements of apprenticeship provision in the secondary phase.

Leaders' completion of commitment statements with employers ensures that there is clarity as to apprentices' entitlements when undertaking the training programme. Apprentices follow the same curriculum as other trainees. This ensures that they receive appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills so that they are prepared to be effective teachers. Apprentices often receive more than their entitlement to complete training away from the workplace. An appropriate analysis of apprentices' skills takes place at the beginning of the programme. Regular assessments identify apprentices' progress over time. Leaders ensure that apprentices are suitably prepared so that they fulfil their career aspirations.

# Further education and skills phase report

## **What works well in the further education and skills phase and what needs to be done better?**

University staff have developed a curriculum that, in broad terms, is ambitious and pays due regard to the professional standards for teachers in further education. However, they have not identified in enough detail the precise knowledge and skills that trainees should gain through their studies. Consequently, not all members of the partnership share the same understanding of what trainees should know and be able to do. As a result, placement-based training does not always complement and reinforce the teaching that trainees receive during their lessons at university.

Almost all mentors are experienced subject-specialist teachers. Most help their trainees to develop their subject-teaching skills. However, this is often not the result of careful quality assurance and support from university staff. Managers have little involvement in the selection of mentors. Although they provide suitable training, not all mentors participate in it and, aside from joint observations with mentors, there are limited checks on their performance.

Trainees benefit from extensive training from their mentors and lecturers in how to manage the behaviour of learners. As a result, trainees, many of whom are initially quite anxious about this aspect of their role, develop their confidence in dealing with a wide range of situations.

Trainees are assessed through an appropriate mix of written assessments, self-reflection and observations. Lesson observations conducted both by mentors and lecturers help trainees to recognise aspects of their practice that they need to improve. Mentors set clear improvement targets that they monitor between formal observations. However, mentors do not always identify the aspects of trainees' teaching that are likely to have the greatest impact on learning, such as the clarity of their explanations. In a few cases, trainees focus too much on student-led and activity-based learning, regardless of whether such approaches match curricular aims, and mentors do not challenge them.

Leaders ensure that lecturers are experienced professionals with the required expertise to teach the curriculum. Lecturers meet frequently to discuss trainee and partner feedback and make appropriate adjustments to the curriculum to better meet their expectations.

University staff help trainees to prepare for employment in the FES sector, and most trainees secure suitable roles at the end of their studies. University staff have developed excellent relationships with local further education providers that help them to secure good placements for trainees. A high proportion of trainees gain employment with their placement provider.

## **What does the ITE provider need to do to improve the FES phase?**

### **(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders and managers have not identified with enough precision the topics that trainees will learn about. Although they have chosen the main themes to be taught, the detailed content, such as specific theories, tools and teaching methods, is left to the discretion of individual lecturers. These detailed curricular decisions are not shared with mentors, who must often find out from trainees what it is that they have been taught. This means that leaders and managers cannot be certain that all mentors conduct their activities in ways that support lecturers' teaching. Equally, they cannot be certain what criteria mentors use when assessing the progress of trainees in their placements. Therefore, managers should work with lecturers and course leaders to ensure that all components of the curriculum are described in enough detail so that all those who work with trainees can support and assess them consistently well.
- Leaders and managers do not have enough oversight of the quality and effectiveness of mentors. They are not sufficiently involved in their selection. Although they provide training, not all mentors participate in it and managers do not track this well enough. A few mentors do not know how well their trainee is performing at university or what their improvement targets are. Mentors conduct lesson observations jointly with university staff, and these are helpful, but it is unclear how this process supports the quality assurance and development of mentors, and managers cannot be certain that all mentors provide the right support to their trainees. Therefore, leaders and managers should strengthen their processes so that they have a clear role in selecting mentors; they can be sure that all mentors undertake suitable training; they know whether the work that mentors undertake meets their expectations; and mentors and lecturers know what progress trainees are making in all parts of their courses and what their targets for improvement are.

## ITE provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	70124
<b>Inspection number</b>	10258117

This inspection was carried out in accordance with the 'Initial teacher education inspection framework and handbook'.

This framework and handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from September 2020.

<b>Type of ITE provider</b>	Higher education institution
<b>Phases provided</b>	Early Years Primary Secondary Further Education and Skills (FES)
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 May and 7 October 2015

## Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, Overall lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Hazel Henson, Phase lead inspector early years	His Majesty's Inspector
David Carter, Phase lead inspector primary	His Majesty's Inspector
Simon Hollingsworth, Phase lead inspector secondary	His Majesty's Inspector
Russ Henry, Phase lead inspector further education	His Majesty's Inspector
Chris Stevens	His Majesty's Inspector
Christine Watkins	His Majesty's Inspector
Elizabeth Moore,	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Woods	His Majesty's Inspector
Martin Finch	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Worgs	His Majesty's Inspector
Peter Stonier	His Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Tordoff	His Majesty's Inspector
Vic Wilkinson	His Majesty's Inspector

## Annex: Placement/employment settings, schools and colleges

Inspectors visited the following settings, schools and colleges as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phases
Dragonflies Day Nursery	EY445867	EY
Kangaroo Teacher Led Childcare	2556190	EY
Toddler University	EY500179	EY
Brinsley Primary & Nursery School	122566	Primary
Catmose Primary School	138113	Primary
Coppice Farm Primary School	122516	Primary
Good Shepherd Catholic Primary Academy	138811	Primary
Langham CofE Primary School	139858	Primary
Millfield L.E.A.D Academy	138999	Primary
St Edmund Campion Catholic Primary School	137428	Primary
Round Hill Primary School	122707	Primary
Southwark Primary School	137480	Primary
St Augustine's Catholic Primary & Nursery School	138508	Primary
St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy	146104	Primary
Victoria Primary School	145018	Primary
Arnold Mill Primary School	122720	Primary
Bluecoat Academy	137998	Secondary
Carlton le Willows Academy	136627	Secondary
Castle Donington College	138820	Secondary
Catmose College	136530	Secondary
Kesteven & Grantham Girls School	138638	Secondary
Burton and South Derbyshire College	130809	FES
Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies	133855	FES
Loughborough College	130748	FES
North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College	130836	FES
Nottingham College	130776	FES
Solihull Sixth Form College	144887	FES

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